



The Society for Oncology Massage Standards of Practice for Preferred Practitioners

The intention of the *Standards of Practice for Preferred Practitioners* is to promote the safe, ethical, and appropriate application of massage therapy for those diagnosed with cancer. Preferred Practitioners demonstrate their commitment to competent and professional care by upholding these standards.

Individuals diagnosed with cancer face a multitude of challenges. These challenges, which may last a lifetime, often begin at diagnosis and continue through treatment, recovery, and survivorship.

SAFETY

- **Education:** Complete a basic course of study that meets the minimum requirements designated by the S4OM. This course must include:
 - *Disease:* Overview of cancer
 - *Treatments:* Introduction to principal treatments for cancer
 - *Clinical Considerations:* Massage Therapy Adjustments Related to Disease and Treatment Side Effects
 - *General Massage Therapy Adjustments*
 - *Administrative Considerations*
 - *Clinical Learning Activities:* Supervised experiences that allow a student to apply knowledge and demonstrate skills covered in the course
 - *Evaluation of Student Comprehension/Competency*
- **Scope of Practice:** Provide work within scope of education, knowledge, and experience.
- **Right of Refusal:** The right to decline the use of any requested massage therapy techniques determined to be detrimental to either client or self.
- **Consultation:** Responsible to research and/or consult with a knowledgeable healthcare professional to determine the best course of action when encountering unfamiliar health conditions.
- **Medical Referral:** Recommend consultation with an appropriate healthcare professional if concerned that the client has a condition requiring medical diagnosis or treatment.
- **Diagnosis:** Practitioner shall not diagnose any medical condition.
- **Health History/Condition:** Conduct an in-depth health history and intake with all clients prior to starting each session.
- **Safe Environment:** Provide a safe and clean environment using Standard Precautions. Provide specific attention to accessibility, safety, sanitation, and comfort. Monitor oils, lotions, and creams for expiration dates and/or ingredients that could potentially cause an allergic reaction.
- **Client Wishes:** Respect the client's wishes to limit or stop the massage.



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ETHICS

- **Commitment to Work:** Remain fully present during the session. People living with and affected by cancer are often medically complex and may require modifications in the moment.
- **Undue Influence:** Refrain from making recommendations that are outside the practitioner's scope of practice.
- **Draping:** Utilize draping practices that maintain privacy and respect the client's wishes for specific areas to remain clothed or covered.
- **Client Consent:** Discuss proposed treatment plan with the client and proceed only after receiving clear agreement.
- **Boundaries:** Respect the therapeutic nature of a practitioner-client relationship.

LEGALITY

- **Laws and Requirements:** Comply with applicable local, state, and federal laws, regulations and ordinances.
- **Non-Discrimination:** Shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status.
- **Client Records:** Maintain accurate progress notes about the client's health history and plan of care.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- **Protection of Information:** Adhere to confidentiality mandates such as HIPAA.
- **Storage of Records:** Ensure proper storage of all client records per local jurisdiction mandates.
- **Disposal of Records:** Ensure secure disposal of all client records per local jurisdiction mandates.

PROFESSIONALISM

- **Appearance:** Maintain a professional appearance.
- **Professional Courtesy:** Respect the qualifications and abilities of other healthcare professionals.